WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of performing a determination of an item of interest in a sample using a single structure, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) providing a sample accessible to the single structure;

(b) placing a first container for processing the sample in a first process path on the single structure;

(c) transferring the sample to the first container in the first process path;

(d) adding a reagent to the first container in the first process path;

(e) mixing contents of the first container in the first process path;

(f) separating the item of interest in the sample from the contents of the first container in the first process path;

(g) transferring the separated item of interest in the sample from the first container in the first process path to a second container in a second process path on the single structure;

(h) bringing contents of the second container to a first temperature different from a temperature of the first process path in the second process path; and

(i) detecting the item of interest in the second container in the second process path.

2. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the step of:

(j) transferring a second sample to a second first container in the first process path;

(k) adding a reagent to the second first container in the first process path; and

(l) detecting the item of interest in the second first container in the first process path.

3. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the step of:

(j) sealing at least one of the first container and the second container.

4. A method as defined in claim 3 further comprising the step of:

(k) removing a seal from at least one of the first container and the second container.

5. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the step of:

(j) reducing exposure of contents of at least one of the first container and the second container to a contaminant.

6. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the step of:

(j) bringing contents of the second container to a second temperature different from the first temperature in the second process path.

7. A method as defined in claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

(j) transferring a second sample to a second first container in the first process path;

(k) adding a reagent to the second first container in the first process path;

(l) transferring contents of the second first container to an optical flow cell on the single structure;

(m) illuminating the optical flow cell; and

(n) detecting the item of interest in the sample in the optical flow cell.

8. A method as defined in claim 1 wherein the second process path includes a plurality of second process sub-paths, and wherein the transferring step (g) further comprises:

(i) transferring the second container to at least one of the plurality of second process sub-paths.

9. A method as defined in claim 1 wherein a determination of an item of interest comprises at least one process, the method further comprising the steps of:

(j) discerning determinations to be performed by the single structure;

(k) sorting samples provided to the single structure by common at least one process; and

(l) transferring the samples to the first process path in an order determined by sorting step (k).

10. A method as defined in claim 9 further comprising the step of:

(m) allocating an element of the single structure to a given determination based on sorting step (k).

11. A method as defined in claim 9 further comprising the step of:

(m) duplicating an element of the single structure based on sorting step (k).

12. A method of performing a determination of an item of interest in a sample using a single structure, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) transferring a sample to a first container in a first process path on the single structure;

(b) separating an item of interest in the sample from the contents of the first container in the first process path;

(c) transferring the separated item of interest in the sample from the first container in the first process path to a second container in a second process path on the single structure;

(d) bringing contents of the second container to a first temperature different from a temperature of the first process path in the second process path; and

(e) detecting the item of interest in the second container in the second process path.

13. A method as defined in claim 12 further comprising the step of:

(f) sealing at least one of the first container and the second container.

14. A method as defined in claim 13 further comprising the step of:

(g) removing a seal from at least one of the first container and the second container.

15. A method as defined in claim 12 further comprising the step of:

(f) reducing exposure of contents of at least one of the first container and the second container to a contaminant.

16. A method as defined in claim 12 further comprising the step of:

(f) bringing contents of the second container to a second temperature different from the first temperature in the second process path.

17. A method as defined in claim 12 further comprising the steps of:

(f) transferring a second sample to a second first container in the first process path;

(g) adding a reagent to the second first container in the first process path;

(h) transferring contents of the second first container to an optical flow cell on the single structure;

(i) illuminating the optical flow cell; and

(j) detecting the item of interest in the sample in the optical flow cell.

18. A method as defined in claim 12 wherein the second process path includes a plurality of second process sub-paths, and wherein the transferring step (c) further comprises:

(i) transferring the second container to at least one of the plurality of second process sub-paths.

19. A method of performing a determination of an item of interest in a sample using a single structure, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) transferring a sample to a container in a process path on the single structure;

(b) separating an item of interest in the sample from the contents of the container in the process path;

(c) bringing contents of the container to a first temperature in the process path;

(d) bringing contents of the container to a second temperature different from the first temperature in the process path; and

(e) detecting the item of interest in the container in the process path.

20. A method as defined in claim 19 further comprising the step of:

(f) reducing exposure of contents of the container to a contaminant.

21. A method as defined in claim 19 wherein the process path includes a plurality of sub-paths, and further comprising the step of:

(f) transferring the container to at least one of the plurality of sub-paths.

22. A method as defined in claim 19 wherein a determination of an item of interest comprises at least one process, the method further comprising the steps of:

(f) discerning determinations to be performed by the single structure;

(g) sorting samples provided to the single structure by common at least one process; and

(h) transferring the samples to the first process path in an order determined by sorting step (g).

23. A method as defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of:

(i) allocating an element of the single structure to a given determination based on sorting step (g).

24. A method as defined in claim 22 further comprising the step of:

(i) duplicating an element of the single structure based on sorting step (g).

25. A method of performing a determination of an item of interest in a sample using a single structure, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) transferring a sample to a first container in a first process path on the single structure;

(b) transferring the sample from the first container in the first process path to a second container in a second process path on the single structure;

(c) bringing contents of the second container to a first temperature different from a temperature of the first process path in the second process path; and

(d) detecting the item of interest in the second container in the second process path.

26. A method of performing a determination of an item of interest in a sample using a single structure, the method comprising the steps of:

(a) transferring a sample to a container in a process path on the single structure;

(b) bringing contents of the container to a first temperature on the process path on the single structure;

(c) bringing contents of the container to a second temperature different from the first temperature in the process path on the single structure; and

(d) detecting the item of interest in the container in the process path on the single structure.